



**TRAUMA TRIAGE GUIDELINES**



- I. **AUTHORITY:** *Health & Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1798, 1798.161, California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Section 100255.*
- II. **APPLICATION:** These triage criteria describe which patients should be triaged to a paramedic trauma receiving center. The final designation of any trauma patient is subject to base hospital physician determination when base contact is made.
- III. **POLICY:** Trauma patients must be transported from the scene as quickly as possible to assure optimal trauma care. Two general classes of trauma victims are recognized:
1. **CRITICAL TRAUMA VICTIMS:** Those with obvious, immediate need for paramedic trauma receiving center (PTRC) level care.
  2. **MODERATE TRAUMA VICTIMS:** Those less injured patients potentially needing PTRC level care.
    - A trauma patient initially designated as an MTV should have frequent vital sign checks and may be redesignated as a CTV if the vital signs indicate a deterioration of the patient's condition.

**CRITICAL TRAUMA VICTIM (CTV):**

A victim of blunt or penetrating trauma with abnormal vital signs as noted, any of the following mechanisms of injury, or any of the following physical findings:

**Abnormal Vital Signs:**

- RESP < 12 OR >30
- PULSE <50 OR >130
- ADULT SYSTOLIC BP < 90
- PEDIATRIC SYSTOLIC BP < 70

**Injuries:**

- Penetrating injury to head, neck, chest, abdomen, back, or groin
- Blunt head injury with GCS < 12, unequal pupils or focal neurologic deficit
- Spinal cord injury with paralysis or paresthesia
- Flail chest
- Bilateral femur fractures

*Italicized Text Identifies Quotations From An Authority Outside The OCEMS.*



**MODERATE TRAUMA VICTIM (MTV):**

The following are meant as guidelines for possible PTRC designation for individuals sustaining trauma:

Injuries/Conditions:

- Diffuse abdominal tenderness
- Blunt head injury associated with loss of consciousness > 5 mins
- Extremes of age (<5 and >60 years)
- Bleeding disorder
- Pregnancy (Gestation >20 weeks, except for traumatic full arrest)
- Paramedic judgment/scene factors
- Suspected spinal injury with sensory deficit or weakness

Mechanism:

- Ejection from the vehicle
- Pedestrian hit at > 20 mph\* or thrown >15ft\*
- Falls >15 ft
- Motor vehicle crash at >40 mph\*
- Motorcycle, ATV, or bicycle crash >20 mph\*
- Extrication time >20 mins with associated injuries

**PATIENTS WHO MAY BE TRANSPORTED TO THE CLOSEST PRC:**

- Unmanageable airway
- Cardiopulmonary arrest from blunt traumatic injuries (arrest from penetrating torso injuries will go to PTRC)
- Pregnant patient >28 weeks gestation in traumatic full arrest

\* These are guidelines for the paramedic, understanding that speeds will be rough estimates only.